

23 September 1952

Suggestion -

Canvass the large prisons of the United States for long-term convicts who have enough linguistic skill and education to produce usable translations of foreign language materials. Work out arrangements with prison officials for farming out bulk translating jobs that are not of a sensitive character.

- (a) Might be a means of breaking the agency's translating bottleneck.
- (b) Would exploit a national asset that is not now used.
- (c) A roster covering a well-dispersed pool of linguistic talent could prove valuable in a national emergency and would probably be worth assembling even if legal obstacles now make it difficult or impossible to use prisoner translators on government work.
- (d) Even if prevailing private translation rates were paid, the per word cost to the government would probably be less than that paid for translations produced by full-time government employees.
- (e) Would allow CIA translators to concentrate on sensitive material.
- (f) Would give some convicts a feeling that they were making a constructive contribution to the national welfare, which might improve their outlook and speed rehabilitation.

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Security Information